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BOOK NOTICES

Christian Freedom. By William Malcolm McGregor. New York: George H. Doran Co., 1914. Pp. xii+428. \$1.50.

This volume is the Baird Lecture for 1913. It deals with the subject of Christian individual experience and freedom as exemplified by St. Paul. Dr. McGregor's St. Paul reminds us of Michael-Angelo's Moses, a striking personality, intensely healthy in his spiritual life, a powerful man with an abiding message. St. Paul had groaned under the tyranny of human traditions; he found *himself* in Christ. When the mistaken seat of authority in the infallible Book is shaken and some would fain look back with wistful eyes upon the other seat of authority, the so-called infallible church, modern Protestant thought must, like St. Paul's theology, be grounded upon religious consciousness itself and the power of religious experience. Dr. McGregor is not afraid of calling this individual assurance mysticism. It is in the line of the mysticism of Augustine, Wesley, and Howell Harris: it develops personality. God in Christ ceases to be an object and becomes an experience and this is the meaning of the incarnation for us. Paul's plan for making men did not start with law—as churches have too often a tendency to do—and then pass on to what is spiritual; “it was spiritual from the outset; and even babes in Christ were cast upon the teachings of the Spirit of Christ within them.” This is why the individual has a right to stand in the name of his Christian experience against any religious system or tradition which would bar this experience out. We should like to quote some gems from Dr. McGregor's book; it is full of sermon-seeds; it is an uplifting and enlightening message for our times.

Liberal Orthodoxy. By Henry W. Clark. New York: Scribner, 1914. Pp. xi+313. \$2.00.

Dr. Clark's book is a historical survey of modern theological thought especially in Germany and Great Britain. Liberal orthodoxy as an effort to interpret the living message of Christianity in a modern language has gone through vicissitudes. Eighteenth-century neo-Platonism in England and Rationalism in Germany expired in apparent sterility. With Schleiermacher begins a new era. He based his system on the feeling of dependence as being the essence of religion, and argued from the facts of religious experience to the existence of the historical Jesus as the necessary archetype of Christian life as we know it by its manifestations in us. He also inaugurated the divorce between philosophy and theology which has become dear to the German liberal orthodox school. A second period begins in Germany with Ritschl, who

showed how Christian experience and the historic Christ stand together and how the only revelation of God is through the historic Christ, rejecting on the one side the old natural theology and on the other mysticism. The Ritschlian doctrine has now given birth to a number of separate schools, and in Germany liberal orthodoxy's complete and permanent theological building has failed to appear. The English public is rather given to thinking in patches, so that instead of great names we have to take as milestones in such a survey two or three collections of essays like *Essays and Reviews*, *Lux Mundi*, and *Foundations* (which appeared too late to be included in Dr. Clark's study). In contrast with German theological thought, British liberal orthodoxy has attempted some sort of reconciliation or compromise between theology and philosophy or science, probably because English thinkers do not have the “systematic” passion. In Great Britain as well as in Germany the permanent building of theological doctrine has still to be waited for and modern theological thought has been content to slide, or begin to slide, into non-theological religiousness. It is, therefore, concludes Dr. Clark, on the interrogative note of “What next?” that the story of liberal orthodoxy has to close. No better guide through the evolution of modern theological thought could be found than Dr. Clark. The attractive volume that he gives us is not loaded with insignificant details; it is probably the best volume of its kind.

Spiritual Culture. By Frederick A. Noble. New York: George H. Doran Co. Pp. 346. \$1.50.

A series of studies on the means of developing spiritual life on modern evangelical lines. The author's treatment of the subject is well balanced. He shows the expansive power of an intelligent, sincere, and earnest faith. Its chapters on the Bible and on reading are particularly to be commended. Mr. Noble says excellently that there is a mystical piety that is not good, just as there is a pragmatic bustling that is not good. Those who will study his book and put it in practice will find out for themselves the happy *via media*.

The Practice of Christianity. By the author of *Pro Christo and Ecclesia*. London: Macmillan. Pp. xix+291. 4s. 6d. net.

The anonymous author is an original thinker; he makes no show of scholarship but there is evidence that he is in touch with modern questions. He shows how the kingdom of God is